

Heritage Lessons



Bringing you the People and Places of Heritage Education — Louisiana

Have you ever wondered what life was like in Louisiana one hundred, one thousand, or even ten thousand years ago? The stories of past Louisiana residents lie just below our feet. Louisiana has more than 15,000 archeological sites that have given archeologists insight into our vast cultural heritage. You can learn about this exciting research during Louisiana Archaeology Week 2003. More than 90 events will take place throughout the state during the sixteenth annual Archaeology Week, September 28 – October 4.

This annual program was created to promote an appreciation of the complex and diverse cultures of Louisiana's past and to promote the preservation, protection, and understanding of their legacy. Many archeologists around the state



Louisiana Archaeology Week will be from September 28 through October 4 this year. More than 90 events will be taking place statewide. Find out more at www.crt.state.la.us

Underground Culture

By Josetta LeBouef
Louisiana Division of Archeology

will be sharing results of their current research with local citizens through activities such as guided tours, lectures and slide shows, demonstrations and special exhibits. Special events specifically designed for school children will also be featured.

For example, Kent Plantation House near Alexandria will host "Digging in the Past" where students can observe archeological excavation techniques, the prehistoric art of making stone tools, atlatl throwing, and aboriginal pottery making and historic boudoirage making.

San Francisco Plantation in Garyville has planned an activity for children and adults to learn about African American material culture and how archeologists use this information to learn about culture and history not found in the written record. Fairview-Riverside State Park in Madisonville will host "Archaeology Day for Students" which features a variety of hands-on activities for students of all ages.

Each year, the Division of Archaeology distributes schedules of events as well as posters that focus on a specific

aspect of Louisiana archeology. In celebration of the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase, the poster for this year's Archaeology Week features artifacts allowing us a glimpse of life in rural areas of the territory in the early 1800's.

Schedules of events for Archaeology Week 2003 may be found at most public libraries. The schedule is also posted at www.crt.state.la.us (click "Archaeology"). To learn more about Louisiana archeology, or to receive an Archaeology Week schedule or other free materials, please contact the Division of Archaeology, P.O. Box 44247, Baton Rouge, LA 70804; 225-342-8170; archaeology@crt.state.la.us.



Amateur Archeology Can Uncover Benchmark Success

Studying Louisiana's historic sites with elementary students is an excellent way to address the Louisiana Content Standards and Benchmarks through interdisciplinary units, according to Debbie Bucu, a teacher of talented and gifted students at Galvez Primary School in Ascension Parish.

Bucu has been involved with both the Heritage Education—Louisiana workshops and mini grants programs for multiple years and has been responsible for some of the program's most creative classroom products. She believes in helping students "be there" in her heritage education lessons.

"Opportunities for hands-on learning are abundant as the children assume the roles of researchers and archeologists by participating in archeological replication experiments," Bucu said.

"Students go beyond learning basic content skills in social studies, science, math, writing, and research as they apply knowledge to create projects or analyze data to reach conclusions about an ancient culture."

Allowing the students to gather and analyze data or recreate artifacts from an archeological site encourages the development of higher level thinking skills.

One of Bucu's students' favorite projects is building a life-sized palmetto

Debbie Bucu
Galvez Primary School
Ascension Parish



One of the favorite activities of Debbie Bucu's students is building a palmetto hut traditionally used as shelter for Native Americans. Students learn a variety of skills in the course of this activity.

hut from willow branches and palmetto leaves. Archeologists believe that the Native American people at Poverty Point and other sites may have lived in this type of structure.

"Students are introduced to geometry basics such as the radius, diameter, area, and circumference of a circle as they create a seven-foot diameter hut using a string-and-pencil compass," she said. "Louisiana Indians used the natural re-

sources at hand to build their dwellings. It is important that students recognize the uniqueness of our Louisiana culture and not be drawn into the Indian stereotype of paper tepees at Thanksgiving. Native peoples in our state never lived in tepees like the Plains Indians. Learners quickly grasp social studies concepts and are able to use the hut for writing lessons and as a reading center."

Students also enjoy gathering and analyzing data while pretending that they are archeologists. In another favorite activity, students are given pictures of artifacts which were found in different sections of the Poverty Point site. The pictures are of cooking balls, stone points, figurines, and other artifacts that archeologists have actually found. After sorting pictures of artifacts into various categories, students utilize math skills to create graphs showing the data.

Next, students are asked to make sense of the data by drawing conclusions from their graphs. Students are asked to speculate about why certain types of artifacts are found in particular areas of the archeological site.

"These are real world thinking skills that scientists and archeologists use daily," Bucu said. "Asking students to think in the same way is not only challenging, it is essential for academic success!"

Weblinks

http://www.edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=312

Traces: Historic Archaeology

A series of lessons with web links that present the artifacts recovered by archeologists and what can be learned by studying them.

www.crt.state.la.us

Archeology Week

Click "Archeology" to learn more about Louisiana Archeology Week, September 28 through October 4.

<http://www.sciencenetlinks.com/Lessons.cfm?DocID=50>

What Can We Learn From Artifacts?

Part one of two lessons on using artifacts to learn about people.

Know More About It Briarwood Preserve

In the summer edition of *Heritage Lessons*, Rebecca Howell, a historian with the Historic American Landscapes Survey, wrote an article on the documentation of Briarwood, the famous nature preserve founded by the "mother of modern forestry," Caroline Dorman.

Howell's research was funded by the National Park Service's Cane River National Heritage Area Commission based in Natchitoches, Louisiana. The commission sponsors many such projects throughout the Cane River Region. To learn more about the heritage area, visit: www.caneriverheritage.org.

Heritage Education—Louisiana New Brochures

New brochures include

- Information about Mini Grants.
- Workshop information.
- Comments from teachers and students.

To request a brochure, contact Kim Bowen at 318-356-7444. A downloadable version is available at www.heritage-ed.com.



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